

Interviewers: Olivia Clelan and Hannah Baker

Interviewee: Mr. Harold Good

Hannah: My name is Hannah Baker, and my partner Olivia Clelan, and we are here interviewing Mr. Harold Good, Olivia's Grandfather. He was born on January 31, 1932, and is currently 79 years old. He served in the Air Force during the Korean War. During his four years of service his highest rank achieved was sergeant. We are currently here at ELCO High School on March 4, 2011. We are conducting this interview for the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress.

Olivia: So can you tell us a little bit about your background?

Mr. Good: I was born in Brent knock township Lancaster County Bowmansville, PA. I went to a two room school for up to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and then I went to New Holland High School.

Olivia: Do you have any siblings?

Mr. Good: Yes, I do I have three sisters and two brothers.

Olivia: What were you doing before you joined the war?

Mr. Good: Oh, when I got out of school for one year, I was a baker salesman and after that year, I joined the air force.

Olivia: What were you thinking when you heard there was going to be another war?

Mr. Good: Well, I knew I was going to be drafted, and I didn't want to go into the Army. I was either going to go into the Air Force or the Navy and so I joined the Air Force.

Olivia: Did you have any family that served or was serving at this time?

Mr. Good: Not at that time. I had two brothers who served in World War II, one in the Army and one in the Navy.

Olivia: Did you enlist alone, or did you have friends that enlisted as well?

Mr. Good: No, I had two friends that enlisted with me at the same time, and we were the largest group to have left for the Korean War at one time from the Reading area. There was fifty of us that left to go into the service. That was in 1950.

Olivia: Was there any specific reason why you chose the Air Force?

Mr. Good: Yes, I just didn't want to go into the Army, and it was either the Air Force or the Navy.

Olivia: Were did you go to basic training?

Mr. Good: I went to Lackland Air Force base San Antonio, Texas, and at the time there were so many guys joining the Air Force it was over loaded. There was no room in barracks for us they put us out in tents. In the summer time we would be marching and training and it would be eight eight-five degrees, and at night it was terrible cold. It seemed colder there than when I was up in Alaska. It was so cold, and we didn't have all our uniforms. We only had one blanket, and there was one guy who caught pneumonia, and they thought he was going to die. He was a senator's son and I guess because of that they shipped us out, and I hade to complete my basic training in Boloxi Mississippi.

Olivia: What was your rank in the Air Force?

Mr. Good: My rank was Glumenta a Sergeant in the Army or Marines but the Air force became a separate branch it broke away from the Army. They use to call it the Army Air Force, but they broke away and became a unit of their own. Then it became the Air Force. My rank was actually Airmen First class, which would be the equivalent of Sergeant.

Olivia: Did you have to do any specialized training?

Mr. Good: I did have specialized training when I was in Alaska. I went to survival school, and I went to leadership school.

Hannah: What did you do at those schools?

Mr. Good: Arctic training they told us how to live in the Arctic, and survive. In leadership school they taught us how to lead the other troops in the squadron.

Olivia: How did you adapt from such a small town life to military life?

Mr. Good: It was a big jump because I had never been too far from home. It was pretty devastating at first, but you soon become adapted to that kind of life.

Hannah: What do you think was the hardest part of it?

Mr. Good: Getting around when you had to go from one place to another and you had never done this before, like they said ok you're going out to California and you have to find your own way to get there. That was quite an experience, you just have to become more aggressive.

Hannah: Where did you serve?

Mr. Good: I started in Texas and I went to Boloxi Mississippi Air Force base. I was there for almost a year, not quite a year. I was in a hangar where they called the radio operators, and I was in charge of restricted material, which I handed out to the student

there. And then from Mississippi I went to Camp Stelman, California, which was in Pittsburg California, and from there I went to San Francisco, and there we got on a boat and we went to Alaska, which was quite an experience. I seen ice bergs, It was very very rough, most of the people on there got sick. I was down in the lower compartment, which was a Compartment C. It was so rough that at one time the ship would come out of the water and you could hear the propellers in the back of the boat would shutter. It was quite an experience. I will never forget the first time I was at mess hall, I got a tray, and you went down a bar with your tray to get your food. The ship went like this, and all the trays slid off. It was quite an experience. Guys were sick. It was awful.

Hannah: What were some of your responsibilities when you were stationed in the various states?

Mr. Good: Alaska was a big depot, and it was very important at the time because not only was it the Korean War, but we had a Cold War with Russia at the time, and we were always concerned about being attacked by the Russians. So we were trained to go out and be able to protect the base. In training you would never know when it was going to happen, but a siren would go off. Most of the time it would be at maybe midnight, but sometimes at one, two three o'clock in the morning. You had to get up, grab all your gear you were assigned like a B.A.R or a rifle and you had to get your helmet. You went out. You put on all your heavy gear. If it was in the winter with you had to put on your Bunny boots. They were really well insulated because you were going to go out in the snow. If you were in the boondocks, you were out there in the mountains they had bunkers built into the ground. You couldn't see them. The command post would be where they gave all the orders. You were surrounding the case, and you were told to protect the base so that was one of the things we were trained to do, and we were also trained to live out there for quite a long time.

Hannah: How about when you were in California?

Mr. Good: That was just a short time. It was just a processing area for guys going to Korea, or Alaska or somewhere else.

Hannah: I know you spent a little bit of time in Korea. Can you tell us about that?

Mr. Good: That was what they called TDY Temp Duty. I was in the supply since that was a large depot. That's why it was important. They needed food supplies from there to Korea because that was a drop off point. A lot of the troops came through there flying to Korea. They would stop over and fuel, and we flew supplies from there to Korea, but then we'd leave them supplies and fly back, and one of the things that happened to me one time. We were flying from Seattle WA to Alaska, and as we were flying I was looking out the one window. There I seen the smoke and fire, one of our engines caught fire. We lost that engine. We had to make a force landing in Port Harding British Columbia. It was a very small village. It was a lumbering town. Most of the town was employed doing lumbering work, and they put us up in a community building which was like a church theater community building and that's where we slept for about a week until

thy could be able to fly another engine in, because it snowed a lot, and they weren't able to get in because of a small air port where lucky to get in and get out. There was just enough room for us to get in there, that's why one of my experiences, and I have another experience where we one time we were going out on a delivery, I was in the truck, I was up front with the driver, and there were 4 or 6 soldiers in the back of the truck. It was raining real hard in Alaska. At that time there were no paved roads. Everything was dirt roads that's why it was called the Last Frontier and it was raining real hard.

Hannah: and back to when you were in Korea. Did you ever get to meet any of the Korean people?

Mr. Good: Very little. They hired a lot of Koreans in them, to work in them supplies places and depots. I never really got to meet any. We had one Korean in my squadron, and we also had a Philippine in our squadron that was in during World War Two, and he was in that march, the Batan Death march and he was a loner. He didn't bother with anybody. He didn't do anything. When it was pay day, go on a rampage. They never did anything to him because he had a permanent rank, and the only way he could be busted would be by Congressional, would have to be by President actually would, you know because he had a permanent rank and because he was in that march nobody did anything to him. And you know, that was his life. He had nowhere to go, and I don't know if he had any family or anything, because you couldn't hardly get anything out of him. He just didn't hardly talk to anybody.

Hannah: So how long were you stationed in Korea?

Mr. Good: Well, I wasn't stationed there. That was temporary duty. You were in and out. Like you were there maybe until you got unloaded, maybe a couple hours and then you left again.

Hannah: Why was the government stationing troops in Alaska?

Mr. Good: Well, at that time it was a very important part of the war because like I say it was a jumping up point for Korea plus it was at that time we were in the Cold War with Russia, and Russia not being that far away from Alaska, it was a very important part. And at that time, it wasn't a state, and so when you were there, it was considered overseas. It wasn't a state at that time.

Hannah: As a soldier what adjustments did you have to make?

Mr. Good: Well, learn to take orders, and be sure you'd done what they tell you. That's probably your biggest thing.

Hannah: How did you stay in touch with your family back home?

Mr. Good: I wrote letters. I wrote quite a few letters. There were no cell phones.

Hannah: Did you create any long time friends in the service?

Mr. Good: I sure did. They were as close or closer than my brothers. You really become attached and if you got to go to another unit or anything it's tough. I had a buddy from Michigan who when I got out of the service, he either came to me one year and I the next year would go out to see him and we were very close, but he passed away and I miss him.

Hannah: Are you in touch with any other friends from the service?

Mr. Good: I was in touch with one from Ohio, and an American Indian buddy that I had who was my bunk partner in Alaska. His name was Quentin Fairbanks, He was from Minnesota, and I talked to him about three or four years, and he was an agent for some Indian reservation and actually when I called him the one time he was in Washington, so he had some kind of a federal job, and he worked for the Indian reservation.

Olivia: You said your over all job for the war was a supplies inspector.

Mr. Good: Yeah, that's what I became. Before that, like that letter there you have, that letter accommodate. I was in Alaska, a large warehouse, and I mean large. We stored anything from aircraft casings to silk. After that, after I was there at this warehouse for a while they made me a supply inspector. What that was, was a lot of times you had parts or anything and it didn't have a number on it, and they didn't know what it was. So they had a book and it was called a T.P.O book and it was about that thick, and in there you had to look up numbers and then they told you what the number claiture of the particular part or whatever you were looking up was and then you had to mark it. And like I said it used to be the Air Force was the Army Air Force and when it switched over, and I was in the beginning of the switch over. Some of us had even got the old Army uniforms, and then we switched over to the blue uniforms for the Air Force. A lot of the materials were in Army numbers which were ordinance numbers, and when they switched over later on, everything had Air Force numbers, and they were all together different. So you had to cross reference. You had to check the ordinance number, and check it over to an Air Force number to see what it was to identify. Sometimes it was really tough to identify something because there are so many parts and so many things. It's tough to do.

Olivia: Did you work with any specific type of plane?

Mr. Good: The only planes I worked with was troop carriers or transport supply planes, cargo.

Hannah: Did you drive those planes?

Mr. Good: No, you know when somebody says you were in the Air Force the first thing they think about is that you were flying. But, there are probably ten thousand guys to every person that flies, there on the ground, because there are so many things to do in order for that plane to be going up. You got to have mechanics. You got to have police. You got to have firemen. You go to have doctors. You got to have nurses. You got to

have a lot of things. All those things you know take care of everything that's on an air base. So there aren't that many people. Your fortunate if you get to fly, and things change so much, because when I first got in I was supposed to be a gunner. And then I was going to go to gunnery school, and then mechanical gunners that went out and went to radar. That changed the whole thing.

Hannah: How about recreation when you were stationed?

Mr. Good: Well, I enjoyed baseball, I played a lot of baseball when I was young. Sport were always a big thing in my life. That was a big one in the service, and that's a good thing, because you get to travel around different bases and stuff playing other teams, and I enjoyed that. I can't say that I hated my time in the service. I enjoyed it. There were times I didn't like it, but that's all part of it. I mean your going to have that. But it was a good thing for me. I met a lot of good fellas that I would have never met before, and got to places I probably would have never gotten to before. So I enjoyed it.

Hannah: Where were you when you heard the war ended?

Mr. Good: I was in Alaska at the time, and I think I was fifty two or fifty three when it ended. That's where I was.

Hannah: What was your reaction?

Mr. Good: I was glad because I'd seen some of the fellas that came back and them are the real heroes. And those that didn't come back are really heroes. Some of them that came back were really in terrible shape.

Hannah: Were you surprised when you heard?

Mr. Good: That it was over?

Hannah: Yeah.

Mr. Good: Yes and No. I thought it really should've been over sooner, but we could've been over sooner if they would've let us go. But there were too many restrictions, and they didn't really let us go all out.

Hannah: What was going through your mind at the time?

Mr. Good: I was just real happy that it was over, and I thought maybe I'd get out a little earlier, but I wasn't sure if I was going to get out or stay in, but I decided to get out.

Hannah: How did you return home?

Mr. Good: Flew home, flew to New York and I was stationed in New York. That's one thing in the Air Force. If you're over seas, you get to pick. When your times up, they give

you three choices of places that you can go, where they can use somebody with your background. In other words, if they need somebody in supply or whatever, if you're a cook or your a policeman, or whatever you are. And I picked up here in middle town Pennsylvania, picked that first, second I picked Long Island, New York, and third was a base in Michigan. I got number two. I got New York, so I was pretty good. I was able to come home almost every weekend.

Hannah: How were you accepted by the American People when you came back?

Mr. Good: We were accepted pretty well during the Korean War. It wasn't like the Vietnam War. We were accepted real well.

Hannah: What profession did you choose after the war?

Mr. Good: For one year I went back up to Bakers Salesman. And then I worked for Gulf Oil Corporation for five and half years. I was on the Turnpike. I was assistant manager for one of the service stations on the Turnpike. And then I went to work for my brother-in-law. I learned the butchering business. I was a meat cutter, butcher for thirty some years.

Olivia: Did you receive any certain medals or anything for your time?

Mr. Good: I received three medals I have here, and there's another one I'd be authorized to have and I'd also be authorized to have the good conduct medal, which almost everybody gets as long as they get themselves straight. That's it.

Hannah: So do want to just go through all of these and say what they're for?

Mr. Good: This one here is the Korean Service Medal, and that was for the short term I served there. And that is for National Defense. Anyone that was in during that period of time received that medal. This is also a Korean medal here. That's a Korean medal. And those are my dog tags. Everyone had to have them. They have your name, your service number, everybody has a service number. Mine was 13379779. And they have on there your blood type which is O, and they have on their P for Protestant. If you're Catholic you would have a C on there so that they know in case you're killed or wounded and they know who you are, what blood type you have, and what religion.

Hannah: Can you tell us a little bit about your family life after the war?

Mr. Good: I got married in 1959, and my wife and I Barbara had three children, all girls. Gloria, Pat, and Jo, and of course Livy's one of my grandchildren.

Hannah: What do you think the war has taught you?

Mr. Good: It's taught me obedience. It's taught me to think how good we have it here in the United States, and to appreciate what we have here. This is a picture that was taken

later on. That's the Air Force uniform, blue uniform. This paper here is a letter accommodation that I received when I was in Alaska. It says we received a very nice accommodation from the division office on your manor of treating Major Johnson and Lt. Col. Dury. During their recent visit to warehouse D50, we were very impressed with your informed tour of the warehouse and the soldierly manor in which you act. It is gratifying to this office to be able to pass along a pat on the back to one of our organizations.

Hannah: Thank you for coming in here today and interviewing with us.

Mr. Good: Oh it's my pleasure. I was glad to do it. Thank you.